

After Jacoby 2 NT and Opener's Jump Rebid -- Problem

Board 20
West Deals
Both Vul



♠ K 10 8 5
♥ A Q 5 4
♦ K 8 5
♣ 10 5

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	2 NT ¹	Pass
4 ♣ ²	Pass	?	

1. Jacoby 2 NT: 4+ card raise, GF, usually balanced.
2. 5-card suit headed by two of top three honors.

Playing with an occasional partner in your first joint foray into a tournament, as East you are confronted with opener's standard jump to 4 ♣.

1. Have you ever discussed this auction with anybody, beyond the bald statement of what the bid means? Have you read anything about the continuations?

2. Who is in charge of this auction? (If you will, who is captain?)

3. What now?

Most tournament bridge players use 2 NT as a forcing raise of opener's major suit. As Oswald Jacoby first proposed it, and as I played it in the early '70s, opener bids a singleton at the three level or a void at the four level. As we shall see, this approach was clearer than the current standard rebids for opener, as stated in *Standard Bridge Bidding for the 21st Century*, by Max Hardy:

- Jump to four of a major with a minimum hand and no shortness (fast arrival).
- Rebid a singleton or void at the three level.
- Rebid 3 NT without shortness to show a sound opening bid (14+ HCP) and a 5-card suit.
- Rebid three of the major without shortness to show a sound opening bid (14+ HCP) and a longer suit.
- Jump to the four level to show a second 5-card suit headed by two of the top three honors.

3 NT is often described as 15-17 balanced and 3M as a stronger hand, a minor difference. Established expert partnerships seldom play this scheme (search bridgewinners.com for Jacoby 2 NT), but standard methods are assumed by most partnerships.

1. Bridge is chock full of bidding traps with simple descriptions, and this is one of them. This is my first investigation of continuations after this jump. Neither partner nor I knew what was correct at the table.

2. West has made a highly descriptive bid that has chewed up most of the available bidding space. If East signs off in 4 ♠, West will usually pass; otherwise, why jump at all? West's jump should be asking East to evaluate and decide. East (responder) is in charge. This is the key to the solution, on the next page.

So, as opener, don't make the 4 ♣ jump with ♠ A Q 9 3 2 ♥ K 3 ♦ Q ♣ A K Q 8 2, for example. Just ask for keycards. With a somewhat lesser hand, try 3 ♦ (short). You will have more space to sort things out.

After Jacoby 2 NT and Opener's Jump Rebid -- Solution

Board 20

West Deals

Both Vul

♠ J 6 4		♠ K 10 8 5			
♥ 10 9 7		♥ A Q 5 4			
♦ A 10 9 3		♦ K 8 5			
♣ J 6 3		♣ 10 5			
♠ A Q 9 3 2	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 40px; height: 40px; margin: 0 auto;"> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">N</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">W E</td></tr> <tr><td style="padding: 2px;">S</td></tr> </table>	N	W E	S	♠ 7
N					
W E					
S					
♥ 6 3		♥ K J 8 2			
♦ Q		♦ J 7 6 4 2			
♣ K Q 8 4 2		♣ A 9 7			

E 5♠; W 4♠; E 4♣; EW 2N; E 2♥; W 3♣; NS 2♦; W 1♥; Par -650

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
1 ♠	Pass	2 NT ¹	Pass
4 ♣ ²	Pass	?	

1. Jacoby 2 NT: 4+ card raise, GF, usually balanced.
2. 5-card suit headed by two of top three honors.

West has a clear opening bid, with 21 Bergen points (11 working HCP and 10 black cards). Playing 2/1 GF, a 1 ♠ opening is correct. (Not playing 2/1 GF, open 1 ♣, planning to bid spades twice: after 1 ♠ and a 2 ♦ or 2 ♥ response, a high reverse to 3 ♣ would require extra values.) West's 4 ♣ bid meets the requirements and West definitely wants East to take charge. Hardy's example for 4 ♣ is: ♠ K J 10 7 5 ♥ K 8 ♦ 4 ♣ A Q 9 5 3.

East has a relative wealth of options, since the auction provides *two* bids between opener's suits. Here is what East's second bids should mean, derived from general principles:

4 ♦ -- we are in the slam zone and I have a diamond control. (A shortness control is conceivable, but unlikely.) It asks opener to bid a heart control (likely a singleton or void) or ask for keycards with an appropriate hand.

4 ♥ -- we are in the slam zone; I have a heart control, but not a diamond control. If you have one, please ask for keycards. This would be the correct bid with ♠ K 10 8 5 ♥ A 9 5 4 ♦ 9 8 5 ♣ A J or better. (Opposite West's actual hand, both black suits should run; ruffing opener's doubleton heart should be the twelfth trick.)

4 ♠ -- we are not in the slam zone, please pass. This is the correct choice on the actual deal, with only a minimum game force, only three HCP in the black suits, and wasted red suit values.

4 NT -- we are in the slam zone, and I have a control in each red suit. Keycards, please!

At the table, East felt obligated to cuebid the ♥ A. As West, it appeared to me that the singleton diamond could be all that was needed for a slam, so I asked for keycards with 4 NT. South doubled East's 5 ♥ bid, so a heart lead should have set 5 ♠. North inexplicably decided to cash the ♦ A before leading a heart: 5 ♠ making. (When 5 ♥ was doubled, I think asker's pass would have said: we have enough keycards, but I do not have a heart control. People do double with ♥ QJxxx.)

With fewer bids available (opener jumps to 4 ♦ or 4 ♥), I think it's best to bid what you have, and not play some sort of "last train" bid. Sometimes it will be necessary to cuebid beyond the keycard ask, which runs the risk of landing in a slam off two keycards. Opener's jump clearly has problems when the suits are not clubs and spades.